

REVENUE SECRETARIAT

Administration Report of the Forest Department.

READ—

The Report on the Administration of the Forest Department for the year 1924-25 received with letter No. 179, dated 13th October 1925, from the Conservator of Forests in Mysore.

ORDER NO. I. C. 4883-4903—FT. 147-25-6, DATED 20TH JANUARY 1926.

Recorded.

2. Mr. B. V. Rama Iyengar continued to be in charge of the Department during the year, except for a period of about two months when Mr. Machaiya, Deputy Conservator of Forests, officiated for him during his absence on leave.

3. *Administrative Changes.*—The posts of the Special Officer for the exploitation of Forest Resources and the third Working Plan Officer, were abolished during the year; and the number of permanent and temporary Forest charges of the controlling staff were definitely fixed in the Government Order of 27th September 1924. With a view to effectively put down sandalwood smuggling at the frontiers, Government sanctioned the opening of 3 Police outposts in the Malnad Districts, with the necessary staff under the control of a Special Assistant Superintendent of Police. A Sub-Assistant Conservator of Forests with a staff of 2 Rangers, was deputed to work in co-ordination with the Special Police staff. An Inspector of Police was also posted on special duty at the Eastern frontier to investigate the methods adopted by habitual smugglers of sandal in the Kolar and Bangalore Districts.

4. *Minor Forests.*—One of the important measures sanctioned by Government during the year in the interests of the ryots, was the abolition of the present class of District Forests and the constitution in their place, of "Minor Forests" placed under the control of the Revenue Department. After a careful consideration of the report submitted by the Special Committee appointed to examine the question of control over District Forests and to submit recommendations in the matter of giving greater facilities to the ryots in the exercise of their *bona fide* rights in such forests, Government in their Order No. I. C. 239-297—FT. 164-20-11, dated 14th July 1924, sanctioned the "Minor Forests" scheme to be tentatively in force for a period of 3 years. The "Minor Forests" to be constituted will consist of compact blocks of unassessed lands in a village or group of villages which are fit to be brought under forest conservancy, and the ryots will be allowed to enjoy, subject to certain restrictions, all the privileges now exercised by them in respect of "District Forests". The other Government lands not comprised in the minor forests will be made available for exploitation by the villagers, under the supervision of the Revenue Department, except as regards reserved timber and tanning barks, control over which will be vested in the Forest Department. The rules submitted by the Conservator of Forests for the working of the Minor Forests are under the consideration of the Government.

The Conservator reports that the Revenue Department have not co-operated with the Forest Officers as regards the selection of suitable areas in the several districts, to be constituted as Minor Forests under the new scheme. The Revenue Commissioner is requested to submit a report as to what progress has been made so far in this direction, as the result of his review of the quarterly statements from the several Deputy Commissioners prescribed in the Government Order. Government trust that the officers of both the Revenue and Forest Departments will bestow special attention to this work and see that the scheme sanctioned by Government is fully brought into effect as early as possible.

5. *State Forests and Reserves.*—During the year under review an aggregate area of 984 square miles was notified as State Forests while 39 square mile was disafforested. The total area of the State Forests including Plantations, at the close of the year came to 3,322.46 square miles. The area of reserved lands at the close of the year was 473.65 square miles. While pointing out that the Forest area under the control and management of the Department bears only 13 per cent of the total area of the State, the Conservator has again urged the need for increasing the proportion to at least 20 per cent. In this connection, Government wish to invite his attention to the observations made in the review on the last year's report, and emphasise that

the question of adding to the Forest area cannot be decided merely on the principle of proportion as suggested by the Conservator, but that each proposal for reservation should be dealt with on its merits, having regard to the agricultural needs of the local population as well as to the advantages that may accrue to the State.

6. *Forest Settlement.*—Government regret to observe that there has been no appreciable progress in the work of Forest Settlement, only 7 blocks out of 63, pending settlement, having been disposed of, before the close of the year. Government do not agree with the Conservator that a whole time officer is required for this work. They are inclined to believe that the slow progress is due to want of adequate attention by the Revenue Sub-Division Officers to this branch of their work and that better results should be insisted on by a stricter review of the quarterly returns submitted by them to the Deputy Commissioners. The Revenue Commissioner is requested to expedite the special report already called for by Government with suggestions for speeding up Forest Settlement work by the Revenue Sub-Division Officers.

7. *Demarcation.*—There is satisfactory progress under demarcation. One hundred and sixty-four miles of permanent lines were cut during the year, as against 20 miles in the previous year. The demarcation and settlement of the Mysore-South Canara boundary, which had been pending for a very long time, were completed to the satisfaction of both the Madras and Mysore Governments by the arbitration of an Officer of the Survey of India assisted by the Representatives of the two Governments.

8. *Surveys.*—Sixteen blocks comprising an area of 103 square miles were surveyed during the year, as against an area of 52 square miles in the year 1923-24. There is still a considerable amount of work to be done in the Malnad Forests and Government desire that continued attention should be paid to the early completion of this work, so that the survey of reserved lands and plantations may also be taken up early.

9. *Working Plans.*—Eight Working Plans are reported to have been drawn up during the year by the two officers engaged on this work, but none of them has been passed by the Conservator, on the ground that the prescriptions contained in the plan entail a large outlay on communications and transport. The Conservator should issue suitable instructions for the guidance of the Working Plan Officers to avoid duplication of work.

10. *Roads and Bridges.*—During the year under report there was heavy expenditure on roads and buildings, of Rs. 23,082 as against Rs. 13,469 in the year 1923-24. The bulk of the amount was spent on repairs rendered necessary on account of the extensive damages caused by the heavy floods in the early part of the year.

11. *Grazing.*—The distress on account of fodder scarcity caused by the drought necessitated the throwing open of State Forests for free grazing on a large scale, for the first six months of the year in the Chitaldrug, Tumkur and Bangalore Districts, and for nine months in the Kolar District. As a result of this measure of relief, the number of cattle admitted for grazing on prepaid licenses fell from 2,81,697 in the year 1923-24 to 1,91,157 during the year under review and there was a corresponding fall in the grazing revenue, from Rs. 67,100 to Rs. 56,214.

The Conservator reports that the 'Kancha System' has not found favour with the people and that except in the Chitaldrug District where the grazing rights are sold for lumpsum fees, the permit system continues to prevail in all parts of the State. Government trust that, if the advantages of the Kancha System are properly explained to the owners of cattle, there will be a change in their attitude. The Conservator is requested to report as to what action has been taken in respect of introducing the 'Forest Village System' in the case of villages exercising certain concessions in the State Forests under the Forest Settlement.

12. *Sandal Damage.*—The progress recorded in the disposal of sandal damage cases is not satisfactory. Including 356 cases pending at the beginning of the year, there were 599 cases for disposal, of which only 181 (or 30 per cent) cases were disposed of by the Revenue authorities during the year. With a view to exercise an effective control over the prompt disposal of these cases, Government have in an order of 30th April 1925, prescribed the maintenance of a register of sandal damage cases in the District Forest Office and in the Taluk Offices as well. The Revenue Commissioner is requested to issue instructions for a careful scrutiny of the pending lists and to report to Government instances of inordinate delay, for suitable notice being taken of the conduct of the officers responsible.

13. *Sandal Smuggling.*—Government are glad to note that as a result of the vigilance and energy of the special patrol staff sanctioned in the Government Orders of 9th July 1924 and 30th May 1925, and of the co-operation of departmental officers of the neighbouring Governments, smuggling in sandalwood is being brought under control. No case of smuggling occurred on the Sorab and Shikarpur frontiers during the year, while all the seven cases detected in the Kolar District ended in convictions.

14. *Sandal Valuation Survey.*—The total area surveyed was 876 square miles. Considering that one of the Sub-Assistant Conservators and two Rangers employed on this duty were withdrawn and deputed solely for the special work of prevention of sandal smuggling, the progress in this direction should be deemed satisfactory.

15. *Exploitation.—Sandalwood.*—The bulk of the sandalwood exploited by the Department was, as usual, supplied to the Sandal Oil Factories for distillation. Successful attempts were made during the year by the Sandal Oil Factories, to sell small pieces of sandalwood prepared to specification, in the Bombay Market for religious purposes at favourable prices. The quantity of sandalwood supplied to the factories for distillation, as well as for retail sales at Bombay, was 1,896 tons as against 1,496 tons in 1923-24, and the net realisations by the sale of oil (inclusive of retail sales at Bombay) was Rs. 17,47,758 as against Rs. 13,24,836 in 1923-24. The increase in the supply of wood to the factories, was due to a larger demand for oil. Inclusive of the departmental sales of sandalwood at the several koties, the total revenue from sandalwood amounted to Rs. 17,58,385 as against Rs. 13,33,128 in the year 1923-24.

16. *Timber.*—The year under review was marked by a rise in the demand under timber from Rs. 7,29,559 in the year 1923-24 to Rs. 8,80,490 due to the supply of sleepers to the Railway Department, of Balagi poles to Electrical Department and of junglewood to the Kolar Gold Fields. Government are glad to note that the supply of Balagi poles to the Electrical Department which was begun in the year previous was successfully continued during the year. Poles valued at Rs. 1,05,000 were supplied to the Electrical Department to replace the costly imported iron poles, for carrying on the high power transmission line from Sivasamudram to Bangalore.

Minor Forest Produce.—It is satisfactory to note that there was an increase in the prices realised for the leases of Tangadi and Kakke barks and that the demand under minor forest produce removed by purchasers amounted to Rs. 10,53,893 as against Rs. 77,878 in 1923-24 and Rs. 8,96,601 in 1922-23.

Lac Cultivation.—The departmental cultivation of lac was continued by the Special Ranger deputed for the work, and 402 maunds of lac were collected. A sum of Rs. 7,945 was realised during the year. Much useful work was done in the Dorasanipalya Lac area. The construction of a pucca shed for the washing of lac having been completed, arrangements should be made early for the washing of lac and the manufacture of spirit varnish and sealing wax. Government consider that there is a great scope for the development of this industry and that the department should devote steady and continuous attention to it in the current year.

17. *Financial Results.*—The financial results of the year under review are on the whole satisfactory. The total demand, during the year was Rs. 40,31,584 as against Rs. 28,39,249 in the year previous, the increase being mainly under sandal oil, minor forest produce and timber. The net receipts of the department during the year under review is about the average revenue for the decade ended 1922-23, viz., Rs. 31.19 lakhs as against Rs. 30.89 lakhs.

Including the previous year's balance of Rs. 7,96,893 an aggregate amount of Rs. 48,28,477 was due for recovery. Of this, a sum of Rs. 35,34,602 was collected as against Rs. 29,07,825 in 1923-24, and Rs. 30,463 written off, leaving a balance of Rs. 12,63,413 at the end of the year. Part of this was however not recoverable before the end of the year, while a good portion consists of irrecoverable items, especially under timber which were under correspondence or under consideration of Government. Final orders have been since passed granting liberal concessions to the defaulting timber merchants, in respect of purchases made by them during the years 1920-21 to 1922-23, owing to abnormal fall in the price of timber, and the Conservator is requested to take vigorous steps to collect the recoverable arrears without further loss of time. In this connection the attention of the Revenue Commissioner is invited to the Conservator's complaint of want of co-operation on the part of the Revenue Officers in recovering the dues under the Land Revenue Code, and he is

requested to issue needful instructions to the Deputy Commissioners of Districts to give effect to the instructions of Government in this behalf.

18. *Inspection.*—The Conservator toured for 156 days during the year and inspected all the District Forest Offices and 13 Range Offices. The short itineration of the District Forest Officers of Hassan and Bangalore Districts and of the Officer in charge of the Bhadravati Division is not satisfactory.

B. SRINIVASA IYENGAR,

Secretary to Government,

Revenue Department.

Resettlement of Malvalli Taluk.

READ—

Government Order No. 10172-1216—R. F. 231-92, dated 9th December 1892, sanctioning the original settlement of the Malvalli Taluk in the Mysore District.

2. Letter No. 43, dated the 7th October 1925, from the Superintendent, Revenue Survey and Settlement in Mysore, submitting proposals for the revision of settlement of the Malvalli Taluk.

3. Letter No. 69, dated the 11th December 1925, from the Superintendent, Revenue Survey, forwarding with his remarks, the suggestions of the Deputy Commissioner, Mysore District, on the resettlement proposals.

4. Correspondence ending with Memo No. 73, dated the 21st December 1925, from the same officer submitting with his remarks, the opinion of the Revenue Commissioner on the resettlement proposals.

5. Letter No. C. 1042—25-26, dated 21st December 1925, from the Revenue Commissioner in Mysore, stating that the proposals of the Survey Superintendent may be adopted.

6. Memo No. 80, dated 9th January 1926, from the Superintendent, Revenue Survey, forwarding with his remarks four objection petitions received through the Revenue Commissioner, from the raiyats of 4 villages in Malvalli Taluk.

ORDER No. R. 3738-49—L. S. 15-25-10, DATED 26TH JANUARY 1926.

The proposals relate to the revision of assessment in 207 villages of the Malvalli Taluk. At the time of the original settlement, there were 209 villages of which 5 have been absorbed and two Kavals and one Forest, which were left out in the original settlement reports have since been included.

2. The river Cauvery which forms the southern boundary of the taluk divides itself into two branches at Belakavadi and these fall down deep and precipitous ravines at Bharachukki and Gaganachukki and reunite after forming the island of Sivsamudram. At this place are located the famous hydro-electric works which attract a large number of visitors from all parts of India.

3. The climate of the tract is agreeable and healthy. The average rainfall is 28.85 inches per year and it is fairly evenly distributed over the taluk.

4. Besides the Shimsha and the Bhima rivers and the Ramaswami and Madhavanthri channels which irrigate certain portions of the taluk in the north and south-west, there are 11 major tanks which are all restored and 53 minor tanks, of which 35 are restored. A sum of Rs. 1,83,511, has been spent for the repairs and improvements of the tanks since the original settlement.

5. The chief dry crops are ragi, jola, avare, togari, gram and oil seeds. The cultivation of mulberry has largely extended, owing to a number of people engaging themselves in the sericultural industry. Betel leaves are grown round about the Malvalli Town.

6. There has been a steady increase in the population of the Taluk, the same having risen from 58,517 in 1881 to 97,464 in 1921. The density of population is 487 per square mile and there are 19 villages with a population of over 1,000 and 49 of over 500.

7. The taluk is well served by road communication. Malvalli, the headquarter of the taluk occupies a very convenient and central position as roads radiate from it in all the four main directions. It is connected by good roads with important railway stations on the Bangalore-Mysore Railway. Two new roads, viz., one from Halagur to Channapatna and another from Bachahalli to Boppagowdianapura, have been opened since the original settlement.

8. Besides the weekly fairs at Malvalli and Halagur, annual jatras are held in three places and a cattle fair is held at Chikarasinakere. These give fair opportunities to the